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LETTER DATED 22 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have been instructed by my Government to lodge a protest at the maltreatment of Serbs by members of the United States contingent of KFOR that took place in the village of Cernica near Gnjilane in Kosovo and Metohija, the autonomous province of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, on 2 and 3 October 1999. The village was to provide an example of the conditions that the United Nations military and civil presences were to create for the functioning of a multi-ethnic society in this Serbian province.

On 2 October 1999, a United States patrol, commanded by Sergeant Gulliam, burst into the house of Mr. Zoran Semionovic, seizing his hunting gun, for which he had a valid permit, as was known also to the United States command. The patrol tied Mr. Semionovic, his father and a relative and walked them through the village, on which occasion they were stoned and spat on by ethnic Albanians without any attempt being made by the patrol to protect them.

The same patrol burst into the house of Mr. Semionovic's brother. An Albanian woman from Cernica was also with the patrol, alleging that all furniture and other household items belonged to her and that they had been seized. Without checking, Sergeant Gulliam ordered that the items (refrigerator, television set, freezer, etc.) be taken away. Mr. Semionovic's brother tried to prevent the looting, but he was overpowered, his right arm was pressed against a table and Sergeant Gulliam fractured his hand bones with a rifle butt. The incident ended after a United States lieutenant came over and ordered the patrol to leave. The household items, however, have not been returned.

Later in the afternoon, Sergeant Gulliam burst into a store in which Serbs were waiting for humanitarian aid, ordered its distribution stopped and evicted all those present.

On 3 October 1999, a fire broke out on a Serbian farm. The farmer and his neighbours gathered to put out the fire, but they were evicted by a United States patrol, forced to lie down on the asphalt road and remained there until all the barns, together with livestock and poultry, burned down. All along the

Serbs, including women and children, were confined and kept under the threat of arms and at one moment they were run into by a United States armoured vehicle.

According to information available, those responsible for the incidents have been called to account, but the measures taken indicate that there are attempts to cover up their responsibility rather than a serious intent to discipline them.

In bringing these incidents to your attention, I wish to point out that they have not been the first cases of unacceptable behaviour of the United States contingent of KFOR towards Serbian civilians. Such incidents encourage Albanian separatism and terrorism and intimidate the Serbs into leaving the remaining Serbian enclaves in Kosovo and Metohija.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.